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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Executive Committee
Fifth meeting
Beirut, 18-19 December 2018

Item 9 of the provisional agenda

Arab Regional Conference on Population and Development: five years after the 2013 Cairo Declaration

Summary

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) will submit to the Executive Committee at its fifth meeting the report of the Arab Regional Conference on Population and Development: Five Years after the 2013 Cairo Declaration, which was held at the United Nations House in Beirut from 30 October to 1 November 2018.

ESCSWA organized the Arab Regional Conference, in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund and the League of Arab States, to review and follow up on the implementation of the 2013 Cairo Declaration emanating from the Regional Conference on Population and Development in the Arab States (Cairo, 24-26 June 2013).

The attached report contains the key messages from the Beirut conference, which will be submitted to the Commission on Population and Development of the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-second session, as a document setting out the key messages from the Arab region. The report will also be submitted to the 2019 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, to be held in New York from 9 to 15 July 2019 on the theme "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality".

Member States are invited to take note of the report and comment on ESCWA activities in the field of population and development.

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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Report

Arab Regional Conference on Population and Development: Five Years after the 2013 Cairo Declaration

United Nations House, Beirut, 30 October – 1 November 2018

United Nations
Beirut, 2018

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Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nations Population Fund and the League of Arab States organized the Arab Regional Conference on Population and Development: Five Years after the 2013 Cairo Declaration, which was held at the United Nations House in Beirut from 30 October to 1 November 2018.

2. The Conference constituted a high-level regional platform to review and follow up on the implementation of the 2013 Cairo Declaration emanating from the Regional Conference on Population and Development in the Arab States on the theme "Development challenges and population dynamics in a changing Arab world", which was held in Cairo from 24 to 26 June 2013 to review the implementation of the Programme of Action resulting from the International Conference on Population and Development that was held in Cairo in 1994. The Programme of Action represented a paradigm shift in the approach to population; it established a solid link between population, steady economic development and sustainable development; and went beyond a quantitative view of population to a broader perspective which recognizes that investment in individual capacity, dignity and human rights is the foundation of sustainable development.

3. The Arab Regional Conference's agenda comprised 10 sessions, which included a presentation of a draft regional report on progress in achieving the goals of the 2013 Cairo Declaration, and country presentations on the issue. Presentations and discussions focused on the links between population and sustainable development. The Conference, which coincided with the start of the fourth implementation year of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, provided an opportunity for participants to review the links between the 2013 Cairo Declaration and the 2030 Agenda and its Goals and targets, to explore ways to include population dynamics and issues in development planning, and to improve measuring tools and identify mechanisms to monitor the population dimension in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

4. Fourteen Arab countries presented their voluntary national reviews. The presentations and discussions helped determine priorities, trends and emerging issues in the region, and assess progress and identify gaps in implementing the 2013 Cairo Declaration in Arab countries. The Conference also provided an opportunity to consider successful experiences.

5. Participants agreed on several key messages, which were grouped according to the issues discussed at each session of the Conference. The present report will be submitted to the Commission on Population and Development at its fifty-second session as a document setting out the key messages from the Arab region. The present report will also be submitted to the 2019 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development on the theme "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality".

I. KEY MESSAGES FROM THE 2018 ARAB REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

A. General messages

(1) Reaffirm the 2013 Cairo Declaration emanating from the Regional Conference on Population and Development in the Arab States on the theme "Development challenges and population dynamics in a changing Arab world" as a comprehensive vision on population issues, and reconfirm commitment to its principles and goals aimed at achieving dignity, equality, respect for human rights and gender mainstreaming and at empowering population groups, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized;

(2) Work on facing structural challenges and social, economic, cultural and environmental obstacles to reduce disparities between countries and achieve the goals of the Cairo Declaration;

(3) Recognize the challenges caused by demographic changes and transformations in some Arab countries, and adopt a new approach that balances between individual freedom and the common good and that takes into account population dynamics in development planning at the national and subnational levels, so as to achieve balanced development based on a strong political will, a clear vision, planned budgets, disaggregated and timely information and data, and cohesive, integrated and inclusive cross-sectoral programmes that involve all stakeholders;

(4) Emphasize the links between the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Cairo Declaration and the 2030 Agenda, and stress the importance of focusing on the population dimension in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

(5) Stress the role of young people as a creative and pioneering force, and the importance of empowering them economically, socially and politically and of building their capacity, enriching their knowledge and involving them in developing, implementing and following up on policies and population programmes, so as to capitalize on the demographic dividend;

(6) Confirm the centrality of women's role and the importance of empowering them economically, socially and politically and of involving them in decision-making;

(7) Work on ensuring a paradigm shift in the approach to population issues, from one focused on controlling population growth, to a rights-based approach that enshrines human rights, including reproductive rights according to the Cairo Declaration, and freedom of choice to achieve gender equality and empower women, girls, young people, persons with disabilities, older persons and the most vulnerable social groups;

(8) Commit to the principles of good governance to ensure strong, efficient, transparent and accountable institutions that work to formulate, implement and review population-related development policies;

(9) In implementing the 2013 Cairo Declaration, promote participatory work between all government stakeholders, parliaments and civil society organizations, including youth organizations, religion-based organizations, academia, research centres, the private sector, trade unions, political parties, the media, United Nations entities working in the Arab region and the League of Arab States;

(10) Stress the importance of ending conflicts and achieving stability in the Arab region, and the positive implications of doing so on population development and on achieving desired goals.

B. Population policies and development planning in the Arab region: trends and national responses

(1) Ensure that national legal frameworks, such as constitutions, legislation and budgets, adopt a rights-based approach to create an environment that supports the development, implementation and review of population policies;

(2) Ensure the inclusion of population priorities in national development plans at the national and subnational levels and broaden participation in policy development, implementation and evaluation to achieve effective policies that respond to population priorities, by building national capacity and knowledge of inclusive development;

(3) Ensure that population policies are consistent with the principles of global frameworks, including the 2013 Cairo Declaration and the 2030 Agenda, and are participatory, innovative, inclusive and cross-sectoral to promote concerted efforts and coordination between institutions;

(4) Ensure that population policies and development planning take into account the local level and address development disparities between urban areas and between urban and rural areas;

(5) Ensure the flexibility of population and development policies to respond to changes and developments at the national, regional and global levels, and stress the importance of periodically reviewing them through clear and measurable methodologies and indicators;

(6) Confirm the need to address the negative effects of political and security crises on populations, which could include limited access to reproductive health services and contraceptives, increased maternal mortality, the spread of early marriage, child labour and cheap labour, fewer employment opportunities, and limited access to education, especially among refugee children, and difficulties in collecting and updating data;

(7) Stress the importance of developing new indicators in line with situations in conflict-affected countries, and incorporating them in population policies and plans. Emerging indicators include those on migration, especially forced displacement, on the impact of conflict on household structures and components, and on the role of women in households and society;

(8) Affirm the important role of religion-based institutions in supporting population and development issues, and the need to involve clerics in raising awareness on population issues;

(9) Ensure the active participation of civil society organizations in evaluating and following up on public policies, establish clear mechanisms for that purpose, and adopt specific standards for associations that might be entrusted with that task;

(10) Confirm the need to develop an effective monitoring and follow-up system, and the needed statistical systems, which provide the necessary indicators to monitor progress in achieving the goals of the 2013 Cairo Declaration and the SDGs.

C. Interlinkages between the 2013 Cairo Declaration and the 2030 Agenda

(1) The 2030 Agenda and the SGDs are fully consistent with the values, principles and provisions of the 2013 Cairo Declaration, including focusing on a rights-based approach in methods and policies and in monitoring and evaluation;

(2) Integration between the Cairo Declaration and the 2030 Agenda does not require their merger and is not limited to a reciprocal relationship or common issues. The Programme of Action set out in the Cairo Declaration has specificities and topics not covered by the 2030 Agenda, and has mechanisms, methods and cumulative expertise that require it to remain an independent programme that complements the 2030 Agenda;

(3) It is vital to increase understanding of the links between the Cairo Declaration and the 2030 Agenda to review population issues in the context of implementing the SDGs. The Cairo Declaration and the 2018 Arab Regional Conference on Population and Development are highly significant in the review and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda at the national and regional levels. The Cairo Declaration and the review of its Programme of Action assisted in establishing a foundation and roadmap for sustainable development in the Arab region that take into account equality, human rights and population issues;

(4) Arab countries must consider the population dimension when preparing voluntary national reviews that assess progress in achieving the SDGs, and which are submitted to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development;

(5) In the future, the review of the Cairo Declaration should be coordinated in parallel with the review of the 2030 Agenda, conducted once every four years, to ensure that the findings of the Cairo Declaration review and its commitments are inputs in the review of the 2030 Agenda;

(6) The Cairo Declaration and the 2030 Agenda urge countries to produce and disseminate data disaggregated by gender, age and urbanization level, among others, to develop population policies that achieve the slogan of the 2030 Agenda on ensuring that no one is left behind and to institutionalize partnerships;

(7) The 2030 Agenda provides countries with the opportunity to operationalize the commitments set out in international development frameworks on population and development, including the Cairo Declaration, by creating an appropriate environment for systematic work aimed at achieving goals and monitoring means of implementation, such as knowledge, technology, data and financing. In the 2030 Agenda, heads of States and Governments unanimously confirmed the outcomes of all United Nations conferences, which laid solid foundations for sustainable development and specifically noted the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. They also reaffirmed their commitments to following up and reviewing those conferences as part of the follow-up and review of the SDGs, so as to achieve sustainable development at the national, regional and international levels;

(8) The 2030 Agenda enshrines the principle of partnership, especially with civil society and the private sector that play a key role in implementing programmes on population and development, assessing their effectiveness and monitoring progress.

D. Ensuring a life of dignity for all: empowering priority sociodemographic groups

(1) Provide social protection to the entire population in the context of comprehensive social and economic structural reforms that enshrine human rights, justice, dignity and equality;

(2) Empower marginalized and the most vulnerable social groups, especially adolescents, young people, women, persons with disabilities, older persons and migrants, and involve those groups in developing economic and social policies and in the sustainable development process;

(3) Take into account the concept of family and intergenerational relationships and include it in discussions on population issues, and incorporate households in population policies as a social unit that affects individual and social wellbeing;

(4) Conduct a critical review of some social values and customs that perpetuate social stereotypes regarding girls, women, persons with disabilities, older persons, migrants and refugees, and that support practices that limit the rights of those social groups and weaken their capacity;

(5) Promote cooperation between Governments, civil society organizations, the private sector and trade unions to build upon the positive aspects of cultural patters and societal values and to tackle their negative aspects, and involve religious institutions and academia in supporting population and development issues and raise awareness thereon.

1. *Young people*

(6) Empower young people so as to benefit from the demographic window by increasing their economic participation and providing them with decent and formal employment, developing policies aimed at strengthening entrepreneurship, self-employment and vocational and technical training, and enhancing the link between education outputs and skills-building. It is also vital

to include young people in social protection systems, reduce their sense of exclusion, protect them from extremism, and build their trust in their States by involving them in decision-making and encouraging their political participation;

(7) Focus on different subgroups within youth groups, including adolescents, students, spouses, parents and workers, which requires developing policies that take into account the varied needs of those groups;

(8) Stress the importance of youth access to information, skills and opportunities to enable them to realize their full potential and play their fundamental role as drivers of positive change in their societies and countries so as to benefit from the demographic dividend;

(9) Reduce youth unemployment by assessing labour market needs and guiding education institutions and students (young women and men) towards specializations that facilitate access to the labour market.

2. *Persons with disabilities*

(10) Adopt an inclusive approach to ensure the economic, political and social participation of persons with disabilities; this approach must respect their rights and provide comprehensive health care, including sexual and reproductive health care, and must go beyond the provision of care to focus on their empowerment and promote their role in all economic, social and political fields;

(11) Allocate budgets to provide services that guarantee and facilitate a dignified life for all by incorporating disability issues in national development plans and programmes.

3. *Women*

(12) Guarantee women's rights as an integral part of human rights, and promote women's political participation as a prerequisite for democratic transition;

(13) Overcome structural obstacles and social restrictions that hamper women's advancement and self-realization and impede their participation in the development process, review legislative systems to create more opportunities for women's empowerment and protection from all forms of discrimination and violence, and improve the policy environment to support their employment and economic participation, especially by ensuring labour market access to young women;

(14) Confirm the importance of empowering women in times of conflict, especially women heads of households;

(15) Ensure that development strategies and plans are gender-responsive, and monitor budgets allocated to supporting gender equality in the context of sustainable development.

4. *Older persons*

(16) Highlight care for older persons as a regional priority, especially in view of changing social roles and demographic transformations in the region;

(17) Develop policies and programmes that take into account older persons' needs and guarantee their autonomy, such as systems for social protection, retirement, comprehensive health care, including sexual and reproductive care, and protection against violence, neglect and physical and psychological abuse.

E. Ensuring a healthy life for all: achieving the outcomes of the Arab Regional Conference on Population and Development and the SDGs

(1) Broaden the definition of health to include its multiple dimensions, including sexual and reproductive health, chronic and infectious diseases and mental health;

(2) Adopt a life-cycle approach that takes into account age and social status, and develop interlinked and consistent health programmes and services that reflect the multiple dimensions of health and their interconnections and interactions;

(3) Recognize the link between the right to choose, fertility rates and population growth, and stress the importance of providing quality information, health care and reproductive services for the entire population, especially young people, women, people living in rural and isolated areas, persons with disabilities and older persons;

(4) Translate international commitments on sexual and reproductive health for all into rights-based policies, implement awareness raising programmes on sexual health, especially for young people, people living in rural and isolated areas and people in conflict situations, and mobilize the required budgets to implement those programmes;

(5) Achieve universal health coverage and provide quality, low-cost health care and sexual and reproductive services for all, especially poor and vulnerable groups;

(6) Address the lack of data on the sexual and reproductive health of wide segments of the population;

(7) Provide youth-friendly services for sexual and reproductive health, offer health and psychological services to women and girls survivors of physical, sexual and mental abuse, raise health awareness and train service providers in that field, and incorporate sexual education in education programmes and develop those programmes to properly educate future generations;

(8) Formulate policies and programmes that meet the health needs of older persons, including hospital care and primary health care, which requires training medical and nursing staff, establishing geriatrics departments in medical schools, reducing out-of-pocket expenditures, and developing data on older persons' health;

(9) Respond to health challenges resulting from migration and displacement, including limited access to sexual and reproductive services, gender-based violence, sexual assault, forced marriage, child marriage, and the physical and psychological effects of conflict;

(10) Strengthen the role of non-government organizations in providing health services for migrants and refugees to rapidly meet their needs and to bridge gaps in service access and provision to migrants and refugees in the region;

(11) Develop programmes and monitor budgets to combat sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, collect relevant data, and establish a database for that purpose;

(12) Urge Arab countries to ratify the Arab AIDS Strategy and increase national programmes to combat AIDS, including through prevention, treatment and care for individuals living with HIV, and respect the rights of that social group.

F. Mobility and environmental sustainability

(1) Recognize that population issues, including those related to urban development, environmental sustainability and migration governance, are intertwined and intersect, and avoid addressing them as stand-alone sectoral issues with individual goals that are independent from other goals;

(2) Reduce irregular migration and expand the scope of safe, orderly and regular migration to empower migrants and benefit from the economic opportunities offered by migration, and to protect migrants from the dangers of human smuggling and trafficking;

(3) Adopt a rights-based approach in dealing with migrants, refugees and displaced persons, especially children, women, young people, girls, older persons and persons with disabilities, and work on integrating them, helping them adapt in host countries and meeting their needs, including access to information and reproductive health services;

(4) Work on altering stereotypes of migrants and refugees from burdens for host countries to viewing them as a real development opportunity;

(5) Work together to tackle the drivers of migration and displacement in the Arab region by promoting country stability and coordinating efforts to protect rights and strengthen the rule of law;

(6) Respect the rights of Palestinian refugees in accordance with international law, particularly the right to return, and galvanize political and financial support for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to ensure its continuity;

(7) Increase international support to countries hosting refugees to enable them to continue providing inclusive services and care to refugees;

(8) Adopt innovative new approaches to urban management and expansion and develop related policies in line with population policies to ensure the sustainability of cities and the wellbeing of inhabitants, and strengthen social services and economic and investment opportunities for people living in rural areas to avoid marginalization that drives internal migration and movement to cities;

(9) Stress that the environment is a human right and adopt flexible policies that respond to population growth and human movement and that address their negative impact, including increased energy consumption, water waste and rising emissions that contribute to climate change;

(10) Review individual practices regarding natural resource consumption, and raise awareness of consumption practices that contribute to environmental sustainability;

(11) Recognize the environmental dimension as a main driver of migration and displacement, given its direct impact on populations, especially the most vulnerable among them;

(12) Focus on data and statistics and on conducting studies and research to assist decision-makers and the international community in making decisions and developing policies that take into account migrant rights and offer them protection.

G. Moving forward: mobilizing means of implementation and follow-up mechanisms

(1) Affirm that the Programme of Action and the Cairo Declaration are necessary mechanisms for implementing the 2030 Agenda;

(2) Operationalize national population policies by adopting effective implementation and follow-up mechanisms that involve all national stakeholders;

(3) Promote the role of population institutions by increasing their independence, broadening their mandate, building their capacity and strengthening their coordination role;

(4) Secure sufficient budgets to cover the costs of projects and programmes on population and sustainable development in national plans;

(5) Promote the role of parliaments in addressing various population issues through holding the government accountable and monitoring the budget, and by incorporating population dynamics into adopted policies and following up on the implementation of the Cairo Declaration;

(6) Stress the importance of periodically reviewing the implementation of the Programme of Action and the 2013 Cairo Declaration in a transparent, bold and objective way using measurable indicators, and that runs in parallel with SDG reviews;

(7) Recognize the important role of data and the need to collect them and check their quality, sustainability and ease of access; use data in evidence-based policy development and decision-making; consider new technological tools and work on forging partnership to that end;

(8) Build the knowledge of decision makers who develop national and local sustainable development plans regarding population issues, sustainable development principles and the needs of vulnerable groups, especially women, young people, older persons, persons with disabilities and migrants, on how to incorporate those needs in policies and subsequently in plans and budgets;

(9) Stress the important role of civil society and the private sector, and join flexible coalitions that push for achieving gains in population and development issues;

(10) Take measures that guarantee to strengthen and promote the relationship and trust between Government and individuals.

H. Other messages

(1) The United Nations Population Fund is committed to supporting Arab countries in facing population challenges, including by providing reliable, accurate and detailed data, to tackling all forms of violence against women and girls and child marriage, to eliminating financial and technical obstacles that impede access to information and reproductive and sexual health services, and to supporting young people and building their leadership capacity;

(2) Urge international and regional institutions providing support to be aware of country priorities and aim to meet them, and focus on the importance of employing a bottom-up approach to population issues to ensure national ownership and accountability for all stakeholders, including Governments, civil society and the private sector;

(3) Intensify efforts to enable the newly established Arab Council for Population and Development of the League of Arab States to perform its functions so as to promote and coordinate work on population issues at the Arab and regional levels;

(4) Invite the United Nations Population Fund and the League of Arab States to support a project on women and family health so as to provide additional data on the status of women, households and other groups during the life cycle.

II. SESSIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

6. In addition to the opening and closing sessions, the Conference comprised 10 plenary sessions on its main theme "Five years after the 2013 Cairo Declaration". The sessions covered the following topics:

Preliminary session	State of World Population 2018 Report, demographic profile of the Arab region, and the Regional Review Report on Progress in Implementing the 2013 Cairo Declaration
Plenary session I and II	Five years after the 2013 Cairo Declaration: voluntary reporting by member States
Plenary session III	Support to member States in implementing the 2013 Cairo Declaration
Plenary session IV	High-level panel on population policies and development planning in the Arab region: trends and national responses
Plenary session X	Interlinkages between the 2013 Cairo Declaration and the 2030 Agenda
Plenary session VI	Ensuring a life of dignity for all: empowering priority sociodemographic groups
Plenary session VII	Ensuring a healthy life for all: achieving the International Conference on Population and Development and the SDGs
Plenary session VIII	Mobility and environmental sustainability
Plenary session IX	Moving forward: mobilizing means of implementation and follow-up mechanisms
Plenary session X	Presentation of key messages

7. The following sections summarize each session and the related topics of discussion.

A. OPENING SESSION

8. Ms. Natalia Kanem, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund; Ms. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, Assistant Secretary-General of the League of Arab States; and Mr. Mounir Tabet, Acting Executive Secretary of ESCWA, made statements. They affirmed that the 2013 Cairo Declaration was a roadmap for Arab countries to work on incorporating the population dimension in development efforts and to take into account the priorities and challenges that differentiate the Arab region from other regions. They also stressed the importance of the rights-based approach as a fundamental principle for achieving inclusive, just and sustainable development.

B. PRELIMINARY SESSION

9. The opening session was followed by a preliminary session, which comprised the launch of the State of the World Population 2018 report and a presentation on the demographic profile of the Arab region. The initial findings of the draft Regional Review Report on Progress in Implementing the 2013 Cairo Declaration were also presented. The draft report was prepared over the period 2017-2018 by the Regional Office for Arab States

of the United Nations Population Fund, in collaboration with the League of Arab States and ESCWA. Participants focused on the impact of changing trends on population issues, the analysis of common trends in the region, best practices, challenges faced by Arab countries, and national institutions' role in implementing country commitments.

C. Plenary sessions

1. *Session I and II: Five years after the 2013 Cairo Declaration: voluntary reporting by member States*

10. The first two plenary sessions highlighted progress in implementing the 2013 Cairo Declaration after five years. Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Oman, Mauritania, Morocco, the State of Palestine, Somalia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen presented their national reviews on implementing the Cairo Declaration, focusing on progress, challenges, successful experiences, existing and emerging priorities, and lessons learned. Those presentations and reviews are a valuable source of information that will enrich the Regional Review Report on Progress in Implementing the 2013 Cairo Declaration.

11. The presentations highlighted disparities in the development, economic and political status of Arab countries. They focused on policy interventions taken by countries, but they also indicated the common implementation challenges faced by Arab countries, including the need to provide quality education and employment opportunities for young people, and tackling poverty, structural and social obstacles impeding women's empowerment and the lack of reliable and detailed data. Participants discussed stakeholders' role, including parliaments and civil society organizations, in the follow-up, monitoring and evaluation process and in preparing voluntary national reviews, so as to establish solid foundations for national ownership of population and development issues. They also stressed the importance of perpetuating the principle of 'leaving no one behind' and of reviewing the effectiveness of population policies.

12. Jordan was thanked for hosting the eighteenth Meeting of Population Councils and Committees (2017), at which was launched the charter of the Arab Council for Population and Development.

2. *Session III: Support to member States in implementing the 2013 Cairo Declaration*

13. Participants benefited from the presentations made by the League of Arab States, the United Nations Population Fund and ESCWA on activities to build knowledge and capacity, and the exchange and education programmes undertaken by the three organizations at the national and regional levels to support member States in implementing the Cairo Declaration and translating its messages into practical steps.

14. The activities of the League of Arab States included establishing the Arab Council for Population and Development, which has joined other social and economic councils in an effort to unify Arab population policies; adopting four priorities, namely migration and displacement, youth empowerment, women's empowerment, and reproductive and sexual health; developing a multi-sectoral Arab strategy on reproductive health and the wellbeing of mothers, children and girls; contributing to the establishment and operationalization of the Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians for Population and Development; and formulating strategies to bridge data gaps.

15. The United Nations Population Fund, whose slogan is 'no real development without investment in human capital', developed evidence-based population policies, incorporated sexual and reproductive health programmes in the health system in general, encouraged the transfer of expertise under South-South cooperation, and supported countries suffering from humanitarian issues and instability. The representative of the Population Fund noted its important role in working with religious institutions and clerics, given their influence on the behaviour of individuals and society, especially regarding sexual and reproductive health and combatting gender-based violence. The Fund also noted its efforts in filling data gaps and supporting the

development of population indicators to monitor progress in the area of population development and the implementation of the Cairo Declaration.

16. ESCWA focused its efforts on population and development priorities and issues, including vulnerable social groups such as young people, women, older persons and persons with disabilities, and worked on issues such as migration, environmental sustainability, social justice and good governance. ESCWA provided support to Arab countries by building knowledge and publishing numerous leading reports in the Arab region. ESCWA also supported regional dialogue and consensus by holding several regional conferences, in collaboration with its partners, which brought together representatives of government and non-government organizations from various Arab countries, such as the Regional Consultation on International Migration and the Third Review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in Arab Countries. Furthermore, ESCWA worked on building capacity by holding workshops and training sessions and by providing technical assistance to member States.

3. *Session IV: Population policies and development planning in the Arab region: trends and national responses*

17. The high-level panel discussed population trends and the relationship and correlation between population patterns and trends and social and economic development levels. It stressed the importance of national responses in population policies by incorporating population priorities and realities in development planning in the Arab region.

18. The findings of the survey on population policies in Arab countries, which covered 10 countries, indicated that constitutions and national laws enshrined the right to wellbeing for citizens and the presence of institutional measures on population and development issues. Major common challenges for countries revealed by the survey included the following: weak coordination between bodies concerned with population issues; limited public-private partnerships; failure to develop appropriate measures for monitoring and evaluating population policies; data gaps, especially regarding migration and displacement; and slow effective planning and implementation to benefit from the demographic window.

19. High-level representatives of Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic highlighted their countries' experiences in formulating population and development policies. They discussed the challenges facing their countries in achieving consistency and integration between policies and the factors that contributed to successfully and fully incorporating population issues in development planning.

4. *Session V: Interlinkages between the 2013 Cairo Declaration and the 2030 Agenda*

20. Presentations and discussions focused on enhancing participants' understanding of the relationship between population and sustainable development by highlighting the strong interlinkages between the Arab regional framework for population and development, as articulated in the Cairo Declaration, and the 2030 Agenda as the global framework for sustainable development.

21. The presentations demonstrated the interconnections and synergies between the two frameworks and their common priorities and principles. They indicated the historical advancement of global efforts towards development, which culminated in the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2015. The 2030 Agenda places human beings at the heart of the development process, stating that protecting the rights of all is a prerequisite for sustainable development. It also enshrines the principles of previous global frameworks, including the International Conference on Population and Development.

22. The presentations highlighted the efforts of some Arab countries, including the Sudan and Tunisia, aimed at implementing population-related policies and at follow-up and review, and revealed challenges faced by countries such as difficulties in coordinating between various bodies and accessing updated and reliable data to measure progress in achieving goals. The presentations stressed the importance of incorporating the

population dimension in voluntary national reviews as a mechanism to follow up on progress in achieving goals and meeting commitments set out in the Cairo Declaration. Participants also underscored the need to strengthen population councils, determine their functions and enable them to contribute to formulating and following up on the implementation of population-related policies and to preparing voluntary national reviews.

5. *Session VI: Ensuring a life of dignity for all: empowering priority sociodemographic groups*

23. Presentations covered the status of priority social and demographic groups, notably young people, persons with disabilities, women and older persons. Participants discussed the transformations that must occur for the region to benefit from its human capital as a key development resource. Discussion focused on emerging challenges and opportunities related to providing an enabling environment for all, and on selected interventions in public policies to ensure a dignified life for all and that no one is left behind, and to achieve sustainable development.

24. Participants focused on the urgent need to change society's perspective on the upcoming generation of young people, which differs from the generation that came before in terms of values and behaviour, and on the importance of developing a new vision and approach for formulating policies that empower young people, strengthen their participation in decision-making, promote their political, social and economic cooperation, and benefit from the demographic window in many countries. Innovation is vital in policymaking to target the various situations and stages in young persons' lives, who are from different age groups and social backgrounds. It is also vital to ensure consistency between education programmes and the labour market to tackle unemployment, reduce youth migration and protect young people from recruitment by terrorist groups.

25. The Arab region ranks last globally in bridging the gap between the sexes. For example, Arab countries have the lowest rates of female labour market participation and political participation. Participants therefore stressed the importance of respecting women's rights and fully empowering them by ensuring their political, social and economic participation in all Arab countries.

26. Participants emphasized the need to shift from a care approach and a pure medical perspective of disability to a rights-based approach, and urged mobilizing of the necessary budgets to meet the needs of persons with disabilities from all age groups, especially given that disability issues do not exclude children, young people, women and older persons, among others. Participants also stressed the importance of enhancing communication between national disability councils and of ratifying conventions on disability issues and the rights of persons with disabilities.

27. The presentations highlighted the status of older persons in the Arab region and the challenges they face because of weak social protection systems. They focused on the need to ensure a dignified life for older persons through economic integration and by guaranteeing financial independence, reducing marginalization and providing basic services and rights, including access to health services and long-term care.

6. *Session VII: Ensuring a healthy life for all: achieving the International Conference on Population and Development and the SDGs*

28. Participants at the seventh session confirmed that health and reproductive health were foundations of sustainable development and a human right that should be provided at various stages of the life cycle. They stressed the need to offer reproductive health services to all, especially people living in rural and conflict-affected areas.

29. Presentations noted that despite significant progress in the Arab region since adopting the outcomes of the International Conference for Population and Development 25 years ago, considerable efforts were still needed to ensure that everyone benefited from health services. They emphasized that enhancing access of all individuals, especially women, young people and older persons, to health services, including sexual,

reproductive and mental health, was a priority that should be addressed to guarantee social justice and sustainable development for all.

30. The presentations stressed that it was Governments' responsibility to develop health-care systems and provide universal and affordable coverage for all, regardless of their gender, age or nationality. They noted the positive effects of adopting a life-cycle approach and ensuring universal access to quality health care.

31. The presentations and discussions revealed several challenges, including education gaps related to sexual health and education, the provision of reproductive health services to young people, and the quality of the supporting environment. They also indicated disparities in health-care advancements and processes between countries and within countries, including reproductive and sexual health. They stressed the need to develop health-care systems for older persons, especially in view of demographic transformations in the region in the coming decades.

32. Participants focused on the considerable challenges faced by conflict-affected countries or those that are hosting larger numbers of migrants and refugees in providing health services for all. They noted a lack of effort in providing services to survivors of gender-based violence, including sexual assault, forced marriage and child marriage, especially among vulnerable groups such as refugees. They stressed the need to intensify efforts to reduce violence.

7. *Session VIII: Mobility and environmental sustainability*

33. The session focused on the connections between migration issues and environmental sustainability, and the impact of migration on achieving sustainable development. That sector is of significant importance in the Arab region, which witnesses considerable migratory movements, large waves of refugees and displaced persons and a scarcity of environmental resources, which threaten sustainability.

34. Presentations and discussions focused on international migration patterns and trends in the Arab region, and on the various drivers of migration and the challenges faced by countries in migration governance. They highlighted forced displacement in the region and the rising number of refugees and displaced persons, which place significant pressure on host countries striving to fulfil the rights and needs on refugees and displaced persons. They also underscored the importance of conducting studies to assist countries in developing better response plans.

35. Participants discussed urbanization, especially given that the Arab region is witnessing the fastest urbanization rates globally, which threatens environmental sustainability in cities and will create political, economic and social challenges if countries do not develop innovative plans and programmes that rely on new technologies to reduce the negative impact of urbanization, such as congestion, pollution and pressure on service provision, and of factors that contribute to climate change.

36. Participants indicated the need to develop flexible policies that respond to rapid, and sometimes unexpected, changes in Arab countries, and the importance of promoting cooperation between Government, civil society and the private sector in that field to increase awareness and implement appropriate programmes.

8. *Session IX: Moving forward: mobilizing means of implementation and follow-up mechanisms*

37. The session considered means of implementation, acceleration, follow-up and review to build the capacity of Arab Governments in fulfilling their commitments under the International Conference on Population and Development and the SDGs. Discussions stressed the need to forge effective partnerships between various government bodies, parliament and civil society, and to enable all stakeholders to actively participate in decision-making to achieve the SDGs. They also focused on the need to achieve peace to provide an enabling and supportive environment for the development process.

38. Participants discussed the role of various stakeholders, including Governments, parliaments and civil society organizations, in mobilizing knowledge, capacity and resources to support implementation and strengthen accountability and oversight. They also discussed regional and global follow-up mechanisms, such as the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development, the Commission on Population and Development, and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

39. Participants stressed the importance of periodically reviewing population-related policies at the regional and national levels, including population policies and those related to women, young people, older persons, persons with disabilities, migration and the environment, so as to accelerate progress towards achieving development goals.

40. Participants focused on the importance of building knowledge, providing reliable and updated information and data and facilitating access to them to formulate evidence-based policies, and of developing appropriate indicators to follow up and measure progress and identify gaps.

9. *Session X: Presentation of key messages*

41. The session reviewed the key messages reached by participants, which are set out in the first chapter of the present report. The key messages were grouped according to the order of topics discussed at the various sessions.

42. The Conference organizers said that the key messages in the present report would be submitted to the Commission on Population and Development at its fifty-second session as a document containing the key messages from the Arab region. The present report and key messages would also be submitted to the 2019 High-level Political Forum on the theme "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality".

D. Closing session

43. The Arab Regional Conference on Population and Development: Five Years after the 2013 Cairo Declaration closed with statements by representatives of the League of Arab States, the United Nations Population Fund and ESCWA. They thanked participants for their participation and stressed their commitment to supporting Arab countries and to presenting the challenges and achievements of Arab countries at global forums and dialogues. They also confirmed their continued assistance to Arab countries in taking the necessary steps to support national and regional processes towards achieving the goals of the Cairo Declaration and the 2030 Agenda and ensuring inclusive and just development in the Arab region.

44. The representative of the Regional Office for Arab States of the United Nations Population Fund, Mr. Luay Shabaneh, congratulated participants on the Conference's success, stressing the importance of the Cairo Declaration and the current review as vital tools to review, follow up and implement the 2030 Agenda. He said that the twenty-fifth review of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development had coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Population Fund. Consequently, 2019 would witness a series of meetings and events to celebrate accomplishments, to consider country data, and to operationalize and implement the findings of the Cairo reviews, so as to ensure that development was human-based, which was vital for the region.

45. The representative of the League of Arab States, Ms. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, thanked ESCWA for hosting the Conference, and the United Nations Population Fund for its continued partnership with ESCWA. She emphasized the need to include all topics discussed under the social dimension of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit to be held in Beirut in January 2019, to focus on human beings as the basis of development, and to ensure that the economic sector played a role in investing in human capital rather than in purely economic projects only. She thanked Jordan again for the Arab Population Council initiative.

46. The representative of ESCWA, Mr. Mounir Tabet, closed the Conference. He thanked participants for the intense discussions, which confirmed that just and inclusive development was a social right that should be accessible to all. He stressed the importance of ensuring peace and security and of cementing social justice and environmental sustainability in Arab countries as a prerequisite for achieving inclusive and sustainable human and economic development. He said that the discussions and key messages emanating from the sessions constituted a roadmap for advancing population issues and for empowering vulnerable groups and promoting their participation in building a better future for the Arab region.

III. PARTICIPANTS

47. The Conference was attended by around 200 participants from 21 Arab countries, including high-level representatives of Arab Governments, parliaments, civil society organizations, regional organizations, United Nations bodies, the private sector and academia, and regional and international experts and journalists.

IV. DOCUMENTS

48. Conference documents, including the agenda and presentations, are available at https://www.unescwa.org/events/arab-regional-conference-population-development.

Annex*

AGENDA

Day 1: Tuesday, 30 October 2018	
8:30 - 9:00	**Registration**
9:00 - 9:45	**Opening session** **Welcome remarks** - Ms. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund - Ms. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, Assistant Secretary-General, League of Arab States - Mr. Mounir Tabet, Deputy Executive Secretary for Programme, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Beirut
9:45 - 10:45	**Launch of the "State of World Population (SWOP) 2018 Report" and Setting the Scene** Launch of the "State of World Population (SWOP) 2018 Report" - Mr. Luay Shabaneh, Regional Director, UNFPA-ASRO, Cairo Demographic Profile of the Arab Region: Trends and Prospects - Mr. Abdellatif Lfarakh, Statistician, Demographer and a Freelance Consultant on Population Studies, Morocco Regional Review Report on Progress in Implementing the 2013 Cairo Declaration: Development Challenges and Population Dynamics in a Changing Arab World - Ms. Hoda Rashad, Professor and Director, Social Research Center, American University in Cairo, Egypt
10:45 - 11:15	Coffee break
11:15 - 13:00	**Plenary session 1** **Five Years after the 2013 Cairo Declaration: Voluntary Reporting by Members States (A)** This plenary session will provide Member States with the opportunity to reflect on the progress made since the adoption of the 2013 Cairo Declaration. Member States are invited to present on their national experiences, highlighting the challenges faced, success stories, existing and emerging priorities, and lessons learned. Member States that have opted to prepare a voluntary national report on reviewing the 2013 Cairo Declaration are encouraged to present the key findings and messages from their review.
	Moderator: Ms. Limiaa Abdelghafar Khalfalla, Secretary General, National Population Council, Sudan
	Speakers: - Ms. Hala Helmy El-Saied, Minister of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform, Egypt - Mr. Mohammad Akram Al Kech, President, Syrian Commission for Family and Population Affairs, Syrian Arab Republic - Ms. Abla Amawi, Secretary General, Higher Population Council, Jordan - Ms. Rafla Tej, Director-General, National Office of Family and Human Development, Ministry of Health, Tunisia - Mr. Mahmoud Ataya, General Director, Priorities Policy and Reform Unit, Office of the Prime Minister, Palestine - Ms. Aqood Hussein Salman, Director General, Executive Directorate for Population Policies, Iraq

* Issued as submitted

Day 1: Tuesday, 30 October 2018 (*continued*)	
	General discussion
13:00 - 14:30	Lunch
14:30 - 16:00	**Plenary session II** **Five Years after the 2013 Cairo Declaration: Voluntary Reporting by Members States (B)** This plenary session will provide Member States with the opportunity to reflect on the progress made since the adoption of the 2013 Cairo Declaration. Member States are invited to present on their national experiences, highlighting the challenges faced, success stories, existing and emerging priorities, and lessons learned. Member States that have opted to prepare a voluntary national report on reviewing the 2013 Cairo Declaration are encouraged to present the key findings and messages from their review.
	Moderator: Mr. Mohammad Akram Al Kech, President, Syrian Commission for Family and Population Affairs, Syrian Arab Republic
	Speakers: - Mr. Talal Al Rahbi, Deputy Secretary General, Supreme Council of Planning, Oman - Ms. Sumaia Mabrouk, Director General, Higher Population Council, Yemen - Mr. Jamal Ait Mouha, Head, Department of Space Mobility of the Population, Center for Demographic Studies and Research, High Commission for Planning, Morocco - Ms. Elham Abdallah Mohammad, National Population Council, Sudan - Mr. Mohamed Teghre, Director of Strategies and Policies, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Mauritania - Mr. Idriss Ali Soultan, Director, Directorate of Statistics and Demographic Studies, Djibouti - Mr. AbdulSalam Mohamud Jama, Senior Advisor to the Minister on Investment and Economic Development, Ministry of Planning, Investment, and Economic Development, Somalia - Mr. Ali Kreir, First Secretary, Libya's Mission to New York, Libya
	General discussion
16:00 - 16:30	Coffee break
16:30 - 17:30	**Plenary session III** **Support to Member States in Implementing the 2013 Cairo Declaration** Participants will benefit from the presentations of ESCWA, UNFPA and LAS on their activities at the national and regional levels to support Member States in the area of population and development through building knowledge, enhancing capacity, and creating platforms for exchange and learning.
	Moderator: Ms. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, Assistant Secretary-General, League of Arab States
	Speakers: - Ms. Dina Douay, Director, Population Studies and Research Department, League of Arab States - Ms. Hala Youssef, Policy and Data for Development Adviser, UNFPA- ASRO - Ms. Karima El Korri, Chief of the Population and Social Development Section and Head of the Unit on the 2030 Agenda, ESCWA, Beirut
	General discussion

Day 2: Wednesday, 31 October 2018	
9:00 - 10:30	**Plenary session IV** **High Level Panel on Population Policies and Development Planning in the Arab Region: Trends and National Responses** Countries today recognize the population and development nexus and are aware of the interlinkage and mutual impact of population patterns and trends and levels of socio-economic development. As a result, several countries across the region have adopted population policies and streamlined population realities and priorities in development planning. This high-level panel reflects on some experiences across the region in developing population policies, the challenges faced in terms of policy coherence and integration, and the success factors behind the full integration of population issues in development planning.
	Moderator: Mr. Bassam Abou Zeid, President of the Press Club, Lebanon
	Speaker: Synthesis Report on Population Policies in the Arab World - Ms. Maha El-Rabbat, Professor of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, Cairo University and Executive Director, MENA Health Policy Forum, Egypt
	Panelists: - Ms. Hala Helmy El-Saied, Minister of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform, Egypt - Mr. Ziad Obeidat, Secretary General, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan - Mr. Mohammad Akram Al Kech, President, Syrian Commission for Family and Population Affairs, Syrian Arab Republic
	General discussion
10:30 - 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 - 12:30	**Plenary session V** **Synergies and Interlinkages between 2013 Cairo Declaration and 2030 Agenda** The ICPD presented a paradigm shift that put people at the heart of development and reflected a global commitment to individual dignity and human rights as a basis for ensuring a resilient and sustainable future. This shift was further consolidated with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. This plenary session will focus on enhancing participants' understanding of the nexus of population and sustainable development through providing evidence on the close linkages between the Arab regional framework on population and development as laid out in the 2013 Cairo Declaration and the 2030 Agenda as the universal sustainable development framework. The discussion will focus on the converging objectives of the two frameworks towards ensuring sustainable development and the fulfilment of human rights for all; the cross-cutting priorities across the two frameworks; and implications for implementation and follow up and review.
	Moderator: Ms. Amal Al-Mannai, Chief Executive Officer, Qatar Foundation for Social Work, Qatar
	Speaker: Mr. François Farah, Population and Development Expert, Lebanon

Day 2: Wednesday, 31 October 2018 (*continued*)	
	Panelists: - Ms. Limiaa Abdelghafar Khalfalla, Secretary General, National Population Council, Sudan - Ms. Fatma Bouhamed, Population and Development Portfolio Manager, General Authority for Sectoral and Regional Development, Tunisia
	General discussion
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 15:30	**Plenary session VI** **Ensuring a Life of Dignity for All: Empowering Priority Socio-Demographic Groups** The ICDP and the 2030 Agenda converge on a basic principle: a life with dignity for all. Adopting an inclusive approach to governance that strengthens the autonomy of various population groups including the most vulnerable, promotes their political and socio-economic engagement, respects their rights, and guarantees their access to basic services is a pre-condition for ensuring that "no one is left behind" and achieving sustainable development. The 2013 Cairo Declaration identified several priority socio-demographic groups including women, youth, older persons, and persons with disability. This session will ask what still needs to change for the region to capitalize on its biggest resource for development: its human capital. It mirrors the spirit of the 2030 Agenda and ICPD focusing on the interconnectedness of the different population groups and issues. As such, the panelists will draw the attention to the reality of the population groups, highlight selected policy interventions, and discuss the emerging challenges and opportunities for providing an enabling and empowering environment for all.
	Moderator: Mr. Mustafa Barghouti, President, Palestinian Medical Relief Society, Palestine
	Panelists: - Mr. Khaled Louhichi, Population and Development Expert, Tunisia - Mr. Mahmoud Nabulsi, Civil Society Team Manager, West Asia-North Africa Institute, Jordan - Mr. Mohammed Loutfi, Executive Director, Arab Forum for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities/DPI Regional Office, Lebanon - Ms. Sahar Qawasmy, Member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, Palestine - Mr. Hafedh Chekir, Population Expert, Tunisia
	General discussion
15:30 - 16:00	Coffee break

Day 2: Wednesday, 31 October 2018 (*continued*)	
16:00 - 17:30	**Plenary session VII** **Ensuring a healthy life for All: Achieving ICPD and the SDGs** Despite much positive development since the adoption of ICPD 25 years ago, universal access to health services has yet to be achieved in the Arab region. Arab governments acknowledged this deficit in the 2013 Cairo Declaration, which identified promoting access to sexual and reproductive health to women and youth as a priority that needs to be addressed to ensure social justice and sustainable development for all. To achieve SDG 3: "ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages", governments are further compelled to develop holistic healthcare systems and provide universal and affordable coverage for all people irrespective of their sex, age, and national origin. This requires governments to reflect on the changing population trends, including population ageing which has begun in several Arab countries, and broaden their efforts to focus on the needs of persons with disabilities and geriatric care. This panel will sensitize participants to the positive implications of adopting a life-cycle approach and issues related to providing universal access to health care. It will attempt to assess the progress achieved and engage the audience in a collective thinking exercise on how to best address challenges faced across the Arab region.
	Moderator: Mr. Gamal Abou El-Serour, Director, International Islamic Center for Population Studies and Research, Al-Azhar University, Egypt
	Panelists: - Mr. Faysal El-Kak, Vice President, International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics and Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Health Sciences, American University of Beirut, Lebanon - Ms. Huda Zurayk, Professor of Biostatistics, Faculty of Health Sciences, American University of Beirut, Lebanon - Ms. Jocelyn Dejong, Coordinator of the Regional Reproductive Health Working Group, (RHWG), American University of Beirut, Lebanon - Mr. Ibrahim Aqel, Director, Institute for Family Health, King Hussein Foundation, Jordan - Mr. Radouane Belouali, Director and Research Professor, International School of Public Health, Mohammed VI University of Health Studies, Morocco
	General discussion
Day 3: Thursday, 1 November 2018	
9:00 - 10:30	**Plenary session VIII** **Mobility and Environmental Sustainability** One of the core pillars of sustainable development is equitable access to and distribution of resources to present and future generations. Development in the region is compromised in light of increasingly centralized wealth and localized poverty, threats to the environment, and population movement trends. Panelists in this session will situate socio-economic and environmental sustainability within the framework of inclusive development. Discussions will focus on emerging issues related to patterns and trends of population migration, as well emerging drivers of migration including crisis and climate change, and the impact of migration on urban sustainability. Panelists will also explore policy options that policy makers can adopt to address those issues and meet the initial objectives of the ICPD.

Day 3: Thursday, 1 November 2018 (*continued*)	
	Moderator: Mr. Omar Abdelaziz Hallaj, Senior Coordinator, The Common Space Initiative, Beirut
	Panelists: - Mr. Phillippe Fargues, Founding Director of the Migration Policy Centre, Italy - Mr. Ayman Zohry, President of the Egyptian Society for Migration Studies, Egypt - Mr. Ahmed El-Kholei, Professor of Urban Planning, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Arabian Gulf University, Bahrain - Ms. Sarah El-Battouty, Senior Advisor to the President of Egypt on Development Policy and Chair of ECOnsult Environmental Services, Egypt
	General discussion
10:30 - 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 - 12:30	**Plenary session IX** **Moving Forward: Mobilizing Means of Implementation and Follow-up Mechanisms** The ICPD and the 2030 Agenda are two historic frameworks that Member States have renewed commitment to on many occasions. As governments further engage in achieving the SDGs and delivering on the key principles of inclusiveness, partnership and sustainability, how do we ensure that the next ICPD review four years from now, showcases tangible progress? This plenary session explores means of implementation, acceleration, follow-up and review. Panelists will discuss the role of different stakeholders, including governments, parliaments, and civil society organizations in mobilizing knowledge, capacity and resources to support implementation and enhance accountability and monitoring. The discussion will also include regional and global reporting processes and mechanisms, such as the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development, the Commission on Population and Development, and the High Level Political Forum.
	Moderator: Mr. François Farah, Population and Development Expert, Lebanon
	Panelists: - Mr. Ahmed Abdennadher, Population and Development Expert, Tunisia - Ms. Hala Abou Ali, Member of Parliament, Egypt - Mr. Magued Osman, CEO and Director, Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research "Baseera", Egypt - Mr. Mustafa Barghouti, President, Palestinian Medical Relief Society, Palestine
	General discussion
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 15:00	**Plenary session X** **Presentation of Key Messages** This session will present the key messages and recommendations that emanated from the three-day discussions will be presented to the participants. They will also feed into the 52nd Session of the Commission on Population and Development whose outcome will be submitted to the 2019 High-Level Political Forum.

Day 3: Thursday, 1 November 2018 (*continued*)	
	Moderator: Ms. Abla Amawi, Secretary General, Higher Population Council, Jordan
	Speaker: Ms. Karima El Korri, Chief of the Population and Social Development Section and Head of the Unit on the 2030 Agenda, ESCWA, Beirut
	General discussion
15:00 - 15:30	**Closing session** **Speakers:** - Ms. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, Assistant Secretary-General, League of Arab States, Cairo - Mr. Luay Shabaneh, Regional Director, UNFPA-ASRO, Cairo - Mr. Mounir Tabet, Deputy Executive Secretary for Programme, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Beirut

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